Oxytropis campestris (L.) DC var. ***gracilis*** (Nels.) Barneby
slender crazyweed
Fabaceae (Pea Family)

Status: State Sensitive
Rank: G5?T5?S2

General Description: Perennial, 2 to 11 in. (5 to 28 cm) tall, grayish-green and hairy, leaves basal, 3 to 20 cm long, pinnately arranged leaflets, each ¼ to 1 in. (5 to 30 mm) long; stipules membranous, ¼ to ½ in. (5 to 15 mm) long, adnate at least half their length, long-ciliate, usually hairy on the lower surface; flowers 10 to 20 mm long, white to yellowish, the keel not spotted, calyx loosely grayish to black hairy, about ½ the length of the corolla, the teeth more or less linear oblong, 1/32 to ¼ in. (1 to 4 mm) long, the sinuses rounded, pod ¼ to 1 in. (1 to 2½ cm) long, sessile or very short-stipate, almost 2-celled by the intrusion of the upper structure, the wall more membranous than fleshy, erect, with a slender beak.

Identification Tips: Stipules are strongly hairy, scapes are mostly over 6 in. (15 cm) in length, and the plants usually have more than 17 leaflets. Though both *O. campestris* var. *gracilis* and *O. campestris* var. *cusickii* have an ochroleucous keel, the stipules of var. *cusickii* are not hairy, scapes are rarely over 6 in. in length, and there are more than 17 leaflets.

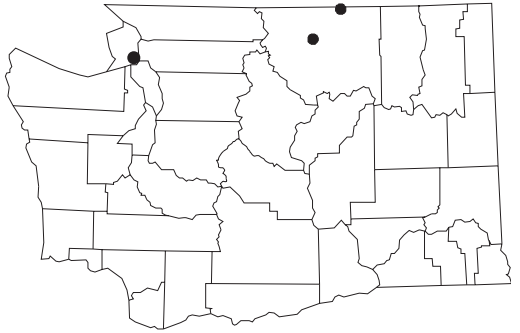
Phenology: Flowering during May and June; fruiting in June and July.

Range: This taxon is scattered from southwestern Manitoba to British Columbia and in the Rocky Mountains from Alberta to Colorado and the Black Hills of South Dakota, and is also in the Northern Cascades and reportedly in the Olympic Mountains of Washington. A regional endemic in Washington, this species is found in Okanogan and San Juan counties and was historically reported from Jefferson, Pierce, and Whatcom counties (Barneby 1952).

Habitat: The taxon occurs in prairies, mountain meadows, open woodlands, and on gravelly flood plains in moist or dry soils. In Washington, *O. campestris* var. *gracilis* has been found growing in montane sites, on glacial outwash terraces near ephemeral ponds in sandy loam soil and on steep, dry, south-facing rock outcrops with shallow soil and some herbaceous cover in the salt spray zone. Associated species at one lowland site include red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), bloodstone (*Armeria maritime*), poor-man's pepper-grass (*Lepidium virginicum*), early hairgrass (*Aira praecox*), and soft brome (*Bromus mollis*).

Oxytropis campestris var. ***gracilis***
slender crazyweed

Known distribution of
Oxytropis campestris
var. *gracilis*
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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slender crazyweed


Photo by Chris Chappell


Photo by Peter Morrisson


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2003 Produced as part of a cooperative project between the Washington Department of Natural Resources, Washington Natural Heritage Program and the U.S.D.I. Bureau of Land Management. Persons needing this information in an alternative format, call (360) 902-1600 or TTY (360) 902-1125.

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Ecology: *Oxytropis campestris* var. *gracilis* has the ability to survive within and adapt to various environments. When growing in deciduous woodland, open pine forest, or in moist meadows, the plants are inclined to have soft, shaggy trichomes and thin green leaflets. Plants in drier areas and more exposed sites commonly have silky trichomes and smaller, thicker leaflets (Barneby, 1952).

State Status Comments: The taxon is known from two recent occurrences in Okanogan County and one recent occurrence in San Juan County.

Inventory Needs: Additional inventory and investigation of previously recorded sites are needed.

Threats and Management Concerns: Current threats include grazing and weed/exotic species invasion.

Comments: *Oxytropis campestris* is extremely variable due in part to inter-specific hybridization.

References:

Hitchcock, C.G. A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey and J.W. Thompson. 1961. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 3: Saxifragaceae to Ericaceae.* University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 614 pp.

Barneby, R.C. 1952. *A Revision of the North American Species of Oxytropis.* Proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences. Vol. XXVII (7):177-312.

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